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Occupational Employment and Wages in Fargo — May 2014

Workers in the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$20.28 in May 2014, compared to the nationwide average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Charlene Peiffer noted that among 22 occupational groups, business and financial operations jobs paid \$26.17 per hour and workers in office and administrative support jobs averaged \$16.01 per hour.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, local employment was more highly concentrated in 4 of the 22 occupational groups, including construction and extraction; personal care and service; and transportation and material moving. Conversely, eight groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including protective service; production; and education, training, and library. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Fargo	United States	Fargo	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0%	100.0%	\$22.71	\$20.28*	-11
Management	5.0	4.6*	54.08	48.22*	-11
Business and financial operations	5.1	5.7	34.81	26.17*	-25
Computer and mathematical	2.8	2.8	40.37	30.28*	-25
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.4*	39.19	29.86*	-24
Life, physical, and social science	0.8	0.7*	33.69	24.72*	-27
Community and social services	1.4	1.1*	21.79	22.05	1
Legal	0.8	0.5*	48.61	33.61*	-31
Education, training, and library	6.2	5.3*	25.10	26.11	4
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.4	26.82	18.67*	-30
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	5.8	36.54	31.97*	-13
Healthcare support	2.9	2.6	13.86	14.81*	7
Protective service	2.4	1.3*	21.14	18.69*	-12
Food preparation and serving related	9.1	9.1	10.57	10.50	-1
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	3.5*	12.68	12.62	0
Personal care and service	3.1	4.3*	12.01	12.11	1
Sales and related	10.5	10.9	18.59	17.60*	-5
Office and administrative support	16.0	16.2	17.08	16.01*	-6
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.3	12.09	16.04*	33
Construction and extraction	3.9	5.4*	22.40	20.58*	-8
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.0	21.74	21.32	-2
Production	6.6	5.5*	17.06	16.61	-3
Transportation and material moving	6.8	7.6*	16.57	16.31	-2

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Fargo is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group—construction and extraction—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Fargo had 7,260 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 5.4 percent of local area employment, significantly higher than the 3.9-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$20.58, significantly below the national wage of \$22.40.

Some of the largest detailed occupations within the construction and extraction group included carpenters (1,030), construction laborers (970), and first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers (760). Among the higher paying jobs were brickmasons and blockmasons and first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers, with mean hourly wages of \$28.96 and \$27.52, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were helpers--electricians (\$12.94) and construction laborers (\$14.99). (Detailed occupational data for construction and extraction are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/oes_22020.htm .)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, cement masons and concrete finishers were employed at 4.4 times the national rate in Fargo, and carpenters, at 1.7 times the U.S. average. On the other hand, construction laborers had a location quotient of 1.2 in Fargo, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, Job Service North Dakota and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

Note

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area included 1,987 establishments with a response rate of 76 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Fargo, N.D.- Minn. Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Cass County of North Dakota and Clay County of Minnesota.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/midwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2014/may/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Fargo Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Construction and Extraction Occupations	7,260	1.4	\$20.58	\$42,800
First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	760	1.6	27.52	57,230
Boilermakers	(5)	(5)	23.58	49,040
Brickmasons and Blockmasons	60	1.0	28.96	60,250
Carpenters.....	1,030	1.7	18.55	38,580
Carpet Installers	(5)	(5)	18.13	37,700
Floor Layers, Except Carpet, Wood, and Hard Tiles	(5)	(5)	15.94	33,160
Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	670	4.4	18.15	37,750
Construction Laborers	970	1.2	14.99	31,180
Paving, Surfacing, and Tamping Equipment Operators ..	110	2.1	20.12	41,850
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	440	1.3	22.37	46,530
Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers.....	(5)	(5)	18.93	39,370
Electricians	760	1.4	26.64	55,420
Glaziers	(5)	(5)	26.04	54,160
Insulation Workers, Floor, Ceiling, and Wall.....	(5)	(5)	17.89	37,210
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	160	0.8	18.16	37,760
Pipelayers.....	(5)	(5)	18.24	37,930
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	560	1.5	21.36	44,420
Roofers.....	90	0.9	16.88	35,120
Sheet Metal Workers	140	1.1	18.84	39,190
Structural Iron and Steel Workers	110	1.9	18.52	38,520
Helpers--Brickmasons, Blockmasons, Stonemasons, and Tile and Marble Setters	40	1.8	16.78	34,910
Helpers--Carpenters	(5)	(5)	16.79	34,920
Helpers--Electricians	50	0.7	12.94	26,920
Helpers--Pipelayers, Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	(5)	(5)	16.01	33,300
Helpers, Construction Trades, All Other	(5)	(5)	9.72	20,220
Construction and Building Inspectors.....	40	0.4	(5)	(5)
Highway Maintenance Workers.....	180	1.3	20.93	43,540
Construction and Related Workers, All Other.....	50	1.5	15.41	32,040

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in Fargo, ND-MN, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_22020.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimate not released.